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WAR SHIPS

FOR

THE SOUTHERN CONFEDERACY:

34

REPORT

OF

PUBLIC MEETING IN THE FREE-TRADE HALL,

MANCHESTER;

WITH

LETTER FROM PROFESSOR GOLDWIN SMITH
TO THE "DAILY NEWS."

MANCHESTER:
UNION AND EMANCIPATION SOCIETY, 51, PICCADILLY.

1863.

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WAR SHIPS FOR THE REBEL SLAVE POWER.

On Monday evening, April 6th, 1863, a large and enthusiastic public meeting of the members and friends of the Union and Emancipation Society was held in the Free-trade Hall, Manchester, "to protest against the building and fitting-out of piratical ships in support of the Southern Slaveholders' Confederacy." The large hall was well filled. The body of the hall and the galleries were free; to the reserved seats, all of which were occupied, a charge of a shilling was made. Much gratification was given by a voluntary performance of a number of fine pieces on the organ, by Mr. Henry Walker, whilst the audience were waiting the arrival of the speakers. The proceedings commenced at seven o'clock, when the chair was taken by Mr. Alderman Harvey J.P. (Salford), in the absence of Mr. George Wilson. Among the gentlemen present were Professor Goldwin Smith, of Oxford; Professor F. W. Newman, of London University; G. L. Ashworth, mayor of Rochdale; Samuel Pope, barrister-at-law; George Thompson, London; John Roberts, Councillor George Booth, S. Watts, jun., C. E. Rawlins, jun., Liverpool; Councillor Rumney, J. Noble, jun., J. C. Dyer, S. P. Robinson, Alderman Livsey, Francis Taylor, Rev. Dr. Parker, Rev. Mr. Bertram, T. R. Wilkinson, R. Cooper, E. O. Greening, J. C. Edwards, Robert Goulding, J. H. Eastcourt, Edward Hooson, Councillor Clegg, Councillor J. Warburton, Peter Sinclair, Councillor Murry, T. H. Barker, Max Kyllman, J. W. Morton, Thomas Elson, Edward Kyllman, James Crossley, J. R. Cooper, Rev. W. Withington, Rawtenstall; Rev. Mr. Dawson, Salford; Eccles Shorrock, Over Darwen; James Galloway, Councillor Williams, Robert Trimble, Liverpool; Ernest Jones, barrister-at-law; Councillor Hampson, Dr. Watts, Dr. P. P. Carpenter, A. E. Eccles, Joseph Spencer, Frederick Pennington, Rev. Mr. Caine, M.A.; Frederick Harrison, J. Woodin, London; Councillor Thompson, Henry Lightboun, Henry Rawson, Samuel Lucas, London; Richard Johnson, Wm. Morris, John Shuttleworth, jun., William Johnson, Hugh Warburton, J. B. Forster, and Rev. J. H. Smithson.

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Queen's College, Galway, 5th April, 1863.

Dear Sir,—I feel greatly obliged by the ticket (which has just reached me) for the meeting at the Free-trade Hall on Monday evening, which you have been kind enough to send me, and regret very much that I am unavoidably prevented from attending. Assuring you of my deep sympathy in the objects of the meeting, I am, faithfully yours, J. E. CAIRNES.

Mr. Leatham wrote:—

"I heartily hope that your meeting will be a complete success, and that the most dangerons and disloyal practice of building ships of war for the Confederates will be put an end to by Government interference."

The Rev. Canon Robinson says:—

"I sincerely trust that the meeting may be successful, and may produce an effect on the Government of the country and the violators of our national neutrality."

Mr. Cobden remarked:—

"I am sorry to say that I see no prospect of being able to be present at your forthcoming meeting, to protest against any breach of neutrality in respect of the civil war in America, in the object of which I entirely concur."

The CHAIRMAN said: Ladies and gentlemen, I am exceedingly sorry that you have got such an indifferent substitute for Mr. Wilson to preside over this meeting. I am glad to meet you on this occasion. The object for which we have met is a glorious one, and deserving of the support of every man who has a spark of humanity in his bosom. (Applause.) It is not my intention to trouble you with many observations, because there is here such an array of talent; but I come to express my deep sympathy with this movement. I trust we shall be able to bring it to a satisfactory issue, and rid the world of slavery; and humanity, religion, and science will go hand in hand. (Applause.)

Dr. JOHN WATTS, on being called upon to move the first resolution, was loudly cheered. He said: Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, the resolution confided to me is simply a preliminary but not an unimportant one, because the matter to which it refers has been fully dealt with at a previous meeting; it will not be necessary, therefore, for me to detain you long. My resolution is:—

That this meeting hereby expresses its cordial goodwill towards, and its fraternal sympathy with, the people of the Free States of America, in their patriotic efforts to preserve national unity, and to extend to all the rights of citizenship and the blessings of freedom.

He apprehended that very little exception would be taken to that resolution. Wedded as he was to the doctrine of non-intervention—opposed as he was, with all his heart, to war—if he had been asked before the war commenced to take the resolution in hand, he would have had some doubts about it, and would have felt inclined to introduce a saving clause in the shape of words "short of war;" but the war was a fact, the sword was drawn, the scabbard was gone, and there was no possible reason why the men of England should not express their sympathy with the side they wished in that struggle to win. His resolution expressed goodwill towards the people of the Free States; he felt inclined to express goodwill towards the people of all

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the States of America. He saw no reason for dissent, and he looked with perhaps more charity than some people did upon the position of the planters of the Southern States. He looked to them in that position in which they found themselves, in which they had been brought up, in which circumstances over which they had had but little control had kept them; but whilst he sympathised to some extent in their position, he felt bound to separate from them when he found that the result of a victory over them in Congress was an attempt at a victory in the field with the sword. He thought there were good reasons for their fraternal sympathies with the men of the Free States of the North. They were of our blood; they were of one origin. (A voice: "So are the South.") No doubt about it; and he said they had goodwill towards the South as well as towards the North so long as they did not infringe upon the grand doctrines of morality, which all of us acknowledged. (Loud cheers.) They were a people who read the same authors, who claimed our Chaucer, Shakspere, Milton, Scott, Byron, and Shelley, as much as we could claim them ourselves; and we, on the other hand, claimed their Longfellow, Irving, Hawthorn, and Emerson, that grand prophet of the North; we felt that they belonged to us, and we could not avoid a fraternal sympathy with such people, so long as their actions commanded our respect. It used to be the fashion to claim for the South the legal right of secession. That day had gone by; nobody advocated it now, for everybody was aware that the articles of confederation were adopted with the specific declaration that they should be perpetual. (Hear.) Everybody was aware that the constitution of the United States never contemplated secession, but that it did contemplate rebellion. The constitution also defined rebellion as being in arms against the authority of the United States. That rebellion was attempted in 1830, and by men who were sworn to maintain the constitution, but it was put down. The same provision and strength of will would have prevented it in 1861, but they had not the same character of a President in 1861 as in 1830. The executive failed, and the rebellion took place, and was now in in full swing. (Cheers.) His resolution expressed not only fraternal sympathy with the persons of the Northern States, but also in their efforts for national unity; and who ever looked at the geography of the great American continent and did not say that unity was very desirable? What would be the result of division? Where would the boundary line be? In the future they would require two large standing armies, and two lines of custom-houses spreading over 1,500 miles or more. They would have two sets of smugglers across the border, wherever articles were at a higher duty on the one side than on the other. There was another difficulty. The States might be divided into the Northern States proper, which were to a considerable extent manufacturing; into the North-Western, which were purely agricultural; and the Southern, which were almost purely cotton, sugar, and tobacco growing. They wanted the productions of the South and the North-West. If secession became a fact, who was to hold the mouth of the Mississippi, that great river which brought down the fruits of the North-West to the ocean? Was it to be held by a slave confederacy, and would the

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ultra-free states of the North-West send their fruits through the country of an enemy? These were some of the difficulties that would beset the question of a division of territory. If he had been an American, he would have approved of the policy of President Lincoln; and they, as Englishmen. were called upon to have fraternal sympathy with the Northerners in their efforts to maintain the Union. (Cheers.) Let bygones be bygones (exclaimed the speaker), and let us look at the present aspect of the question. Whether the war was originated or not for the abolition of slavery, nobody can deny that, on the part of the North, it means now liberty to four millions of human beings—(cheers)—education to them and their children, freedom to move, freedom to work, and freedom to get wages. (Loud cheers.) That is another reason for fraternal sympathy with the North. I was reading, a few days ago, the letters of a Manchester deceased gentleman, written from the United States of America in 1857, the first year of Buchanan's presidency, and I was somewhat startled to find expressions to this effect in a letter written from the South:—"The abolition party is increasing in strength, * * * and at this rate of progress, in 1861 they will have a majority; and if they have a majority, division is absolutely certain." There is not the slightest doubt that preparations were made immediately after the election of Buchanan, if not before, to take the step which has since been taken, if an abolitionist president should ever be elected. (Hear.) I say it is clear that at present the battle is for slavery and anti-slavery, and, therefore, for the working men of Great Britain the question is a very simple one. Supposing the South to succeed, those immense territories not yet fashioned into States, which are controlled by the Federal Congress, and which are open to the emigrants of the present and all future generations, would have to be divided. Slavery would get a portion of them, and therefore the prairie land of liberty for our children and children's children would be lessened. (Hear.) You will say this is a selfish view. It may be; but it is a philanthropic view as well as a selfish one; for whilst I believe that nothing can be more opposed to each other than slavery and liberty, ignorance and intelligence, exhaustion of soil and perennial fertility—for that is what these two principles mean—(hear)—it seems to me that if we take the side of liberty, intelligence, and perennial fertility, that we are on the right side, and that we are philanthropists, even though selfish. (Cheers.) What Englishman ever thinks of going into a slave State to live a happy life. There are but three classes—slave-owners, slaves, and "mean whites," or "white trash." (Hear.) There is no room for any others; they could not live under the regimen. How often have we heard of people who, in passing through a slave State, have perhaps dropped a word in an hotel on the subject of slavery, and who have been turned instantly out of the State, some of them tarred and feathered, and some even worse treated? (Hear.) English workmen would not like to contemplate a life of that sort. But if they go to the free States of the North, if they go to those luxuriant lands "flowing with milk and honey" in the North-West, what treatment do they get there? The English workman writes home, and says—Money is not to be had; but if I

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could send you pigs, or fruit, or corn, you should have plenty. And what does an English workman care for if he gets his bacon, his corn, his fruits, his home and his family around him, his liberty to travel, and as many more of the comforts of civilised life as he can get out there? That is his interest, and it is the interest of the world. We want corn from the North-West. People talk about the recognition of the Southern States, and I see that some folks have drawn a red-herring trail across your path even to-day on this subject, and have asked working men to lift up their voices here to-night against the North for keeping back cotton, and so starving our operatives! Let us look at this question for a moment, and let us, in the first instance, suppose it true. What would recognition of the South do? Even if it gave us cotton, it would stop our corn; for it would plunge us into a war with the North; and who would exchange dear cotton for dear corn? (Hear.) America sends us almost twice as much corn as the other largest export country in the world—Russia—and if American exports of corn were to be stopped, corn would rise as much in price as cotton has done. Would that be for the benefit of the working men here? ("No;" and cheers.) Let us look further. I say that recognition would not infallibly bring cotton. (Hear.) We should first have to break the blockade, and the breaking of a blockade means war! (Hear.) What does our present trouble cost us? And when I state the trouble in money, remember it is only because money enables us to give the best comprehensible estimate of our loss. We are losing in wages now in the cotton districts from nine to ten millions a year. What would a year's war cost? (Hear.) A year's war with Russia cost us a hundred millions. (Hear.) In addition to that, it cost us from 30,000 to 40,000 lives. (Hear.) It cost the Turks as much; it cost the French as much; it cost the Russians as much! And all this vast amount of capital is abstracted from industrial employment; and that shortens bread, and shortens comforts. . (Hear.) I may be told, perhaps, that recognition of the South does not involve war. If it does not, it means nothing. (Hear.) A simple recognition of the South as a nation would leave the blockade untouched, would leave the North and the South as they are at this moment, and would not bring us a bale of cotton. (Hear.) The working men of England won't forget that from the Northern States of America we have a fraternal feeling in our distress, and the feeling is put into the practical shape that the Quaker put it, when he said to somebody who expressed a sorrowing sympathy, "How much art thou sorry? I am sorry £10." (Cheers and laughter.) The people of the North say to us, "We unwillingly help to cause you trouble; we will do what we can to assuage your grief. We cannot send you cotton; but we send you bread, that for which you work up cotton." (Loud cheers.) Has anybody ever heard a Southern planter say, "We sympathise with you, people in England; we are the unwilling cause of your trouble; we will propose to our giant opponents of the North that they will allow ten ships freighted with cotton to go peacefully down past New Orleans, and across to Liverpool, as a gift to Lancashire?" ("No.") I have not heard of any such offer;

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therefore it seems to me that our best friends are in the North in every respect. (Cheers.) We are told sometimes that it is not slavery only that the South fights for, but that they are anxious for free-trade. Why did they not agitate for free-trade, as we did in this country when we got it? (Cheers.) Would that have cost them as much as war? And are the Yankees such fools as not to know that the consumers pay the import duties, and would they, for the sake of a few manufacturing States, charge themselves with immense duties, if they had been instructed in the political economy of the matter? (Hear.) Why even our farmers thank us for corn-law repeal; they believed themselves interested; they are convinced that they were wrong; and, after our experience, the battle is half fought for America. (Hear.) And if it had been free-trade that the South wanted, instead of voting in the majorities for high tariffs, they would have gone for an agitation for free-trade throughout the States. (Hear.) I have been told also that they were greatly offended because the Fugitive Slave Law was not properly carried out according to the constitution, and that runaway slaves were not given back. Suppose it so; will they be better for separation? Will they get from an enemy what they could not get from a friend? Will slaves be sent back across the border when they have two armies, one on each side of that border, and two rows of custom-house officials? (Hear.) Then they cannot gain in that respect; on the contrary, there will have to be a new belt of so-called slave States, which will no longer be slave States, and which will compel the Confederacy all the more to seek annexations further South. I sympathise with the North because I do not believe the tale which is told me sometimes on 'Change here, that the South would be for making terms for the abolition of slavery. I say, if there be any truth in that report, never were men so egregiously mistaken in this world as are the men in the Southern Congress that they do not immediately call a convention and pass such an ordinance as should make emancipation a part of their constitution. If they would do that, they would end the war; that would secure them the sympathy of working men on this side; for I have no doubt that the working men would be willing that they should have the completest self-government. Self-government! Why they had it in every respect before the rebellion. (Cheers.) They had it in every respect, except in international relations; and if they win in this struggle, they will still have international relations between the Southern Confederacy and other governments in the world; and every individual State will be exactly in the same position to the Southern Confederacy that the individual States were to the Federal Union whilst they remained part of it. And therefore on that head they can gain nothing. Then it is clear, on all these grounds, that our sympathies ought to go with the North. It is clear also on another ground, and which will be brought before you in the succeeding resolution. Some time ago, I saw a paragraph in the *Morning Post*—which is supposed to be inspired by our noble Premier—which gave me intense pain and vexation; it was to this effect, that the day may come when we shall be obliged to recognise the South; and it reasoned thus:—It seemed to lay down a plan for the

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Southern Confederacy, by which to secure itself recognition; that plan was: suppose the *Alabama*, or some other vessel commissioned by the South, and trying to pick up Northern merchantmen, should, by mistake, or by design, pick up an English merchantman, our duty would be to seek recompense. But where should we seek it? Not having recognised the South, we should have no government to go to, unless we should lay our claim before the North; and this might force us, from the obvious injustice of the case, to recognise the South, in order to get recompense. (Hisses.) Now that does not seem to me so very demonstrative. I think there are two other courses open: one is, to delay the claim until the end of the war, and then present it to the South, if successful, or to the North, if the Union is preserved (cheers); and the other course which is open to us is, to have a man-of-war of our own, and to sink the pirate! (Loud cheers.) With these views, my sympathies flow duly North, and with great pleasure I propose the first resolution. (Cheers.)

[A large placard, on a board, was at this point displayed, having on it the words, "The *Alexandra*, one of the vessels intended for the Confederates, seized in Liverpool by the government." There were loud cheers on the board being exhibited, and still louder cheers when the words were read out.]

Mr. G. L. Ashworth (Mayor of Rochdale) seconded the resolution. Referring to the placard, he said, Most sincerely do I hope that the announcement which has just been made is an earnest of the intentions of our government—(hear)—and that in future that "cold neutrality," the allusion to which met with such an insulting reception from our Premier on a recent occasion, may cease any longer to be such; and that henceforth it may be understood by the Northern States of America that whilst we intend to continue a course of non-intervention, still the sympathies of all Englishmen are for the freedom of mankind. (Cheers.) Feeling as I do, that all persons who occupy prominent and official positions have a a sacred duty to perform in this crisis—(hear)—I felt I could not refuse the invitation of your committee. (Cheers.) I most heartily sympathise with the sentiments of every resolution contained in this evening's programme, and especially the one so admirably moved by Dr. Watts. It may tend to console the unemployed operatives in their sufferings if they reflect that the American people are undergoing unparalleled distress, which, in my judgment, will lead to the emancipation of four or five millions of people in the Southern States of America. (Loud cheers.) Taking that view of the question, can our suffering artisans, whose conduct has been the admiration of the world, hesitate what course to pursue? (Hear.) Let the working men of Lancashire remember that the people of England will not see them starve, when suffering for causes beyond their control—(hear);—let them rather say,—this matter is in the hands of a higher power, and that divine being who has the control of all events will overrule this terrible calamity for the good of the world at large. (Hear.) Gentlemen, I have felt humiliated when I have read the press, during the past few months, to know that

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it is almost impossible to find an article thoroughly in favour of the freedom of the slave. (Hear.) I say that this is a blot upon the English name, and it does shame to the character of those whose footsteps we profess to follow. "All honour," we sometimes say, "to our ancestors;" but let us be worthy of the name they have handed down to us; and when history shall write our conduct in this matter, let it be said of us, as we with pride say of those who went before us, that we handed down with untarnished lustre that name for freedom which was bequeathed to us. (Cheers.) Gentlemen, I feel proud that this meeting has been called. It is high time that there should be an expression of opinion of an unmistakeable character—(cheers)—and no place in England is more worthy to give the key note to the land than Manchester. (Cheers.) And no town, allow me to add, is more worthy to be represented in this meeting than the birthplace of John Bright—(cheers)—who, on this question, as on all former questions, has had the courage to brave public opinion, and bear the contempt that the honest expression of his opinion was sure to bring down upon him, knowing that posterity would approve the conduct he had pursued. (Cheers.) I am satisfied that the people of England have been misled by the press. (Hear.) But I believe there is a bright star dawning in the distance, and I believe the day is not far distant when England, through this meeting, will show a very different complexion on this question, and that the North will find that England is true to its principles when the truth is clearly before it. (Cheers.) I heartily second this resolution.

Mr. George Thompson, who was greeted with loud cheers, supported the resolution. He said they were going to decide that night an important question—whether England would tolerate the infamy brought upon her character by those who, whether legally or not, had engaged for some time in transactions of the most immoral and inhuman kind. (Loud cheers.) He blushed for his country—at least for those men in it who had brought the shame and reproach upon it. It had come to this, that the capitalists, shipbuilders, and money brokers of England, were the last refuge of that felonious and traitorous conspiracy that for the present ruled despotically the so-called Confederate States. (Cheers.) In every one of their expectations of help and sympathy, the South had been disappointed; but it had found aid and comfort from a source to which in its original programme it never looked. He did not expect that when it should sound the tocsin of war the loyal people in the Northern States would be prevented from taking any steps towards the suppression of the rebellion by the sympathy and aid the rebels would receive from the great and well-organised and hitherto omnipotent Democratic party. But they were disappointed. The fall of Fort Sumter, the surrender of the garrison into the hands of those who had mounted the rebel snake flag, united the North as one man, Democrat shook hands with Republican, both

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shook hands with the Abolitionist; there were no copperheads in that day, but the North was as one for the union and constitution and maintenance of law. (Cheers.) They looked to the speedy annexation with their number—for they were then but seven States—of the Border States: but in that they were also disappointed. They looked for the speedy annexation of the great Western States, but they had hitherto looked in vain. They believed most implicitly in the omnipotence of cotton; but in that belief they had been miserably disappointed. They believed almost as confidently, and propagated a thousand times, that the withholding of cotton would cause first anxiety, then disaffection, then anarchy, and then revolution in this country; but even in that, thanks to the virtue of Lancashire, they had been mistaken. (Loud cheers.) They looked for the combined navies of France and England to sweep clear all the vessels that the Northern States might send to blockade their ports; and that hope had miserably failed. (Cheers.) In every hope that they had cultivated they had been disappointed; and he was sorry that there were any men in this country sordid enough to become enemies of human liberty. (Loud cheers.) Availing themselves of the law (continued Mr. Thompson) but trampling upon the dictates of justice and the principles of morality, a set of men, I say, have come to their aid influenced by the most sordid and the most disreputable motives. (Hear, hear.) It was against that class of my fellow-countrymen that I had intended to lift up my voice to night. (Cheers, and cries of "Go on.") I should not have dealt with the legal aspects of this question, the law of which will be looked into by men learned in the law. I look only at the morale of this great question, and I say that however the men who have engaged in this traffic may be under the shelter of international law, they are condemned by every man who has a right sense of what is just and honourable and right. (Cheers.) To get rid of a reproach that we might justly lie under, and in order to do everything in our power to avert a misunderstanding and a war between this country and the United States of America, it is necessary that we should denounce these builders of piratical ships, and these negociators of "copperhead" loans. As a proof of the suppression of the truth by the newspapers of the present day, and especially by the leading journal in London, let me ask you at your leisure to contrast the telegrams communicated by the *Daily Telegraph* in London with the telegrams of the *Times* newspaper, dictated by their own special agent, I believe, at some point on the shores of America. You will find that while Reuter's telegrams ascribe to the Federal army some five or six distinct successes in various parts of the country, the *Times* has never communicated to Great Britain or the world one of those successes. (Shame.) Let me disabuse the minds of any here who may imagine that the struggle now going on between the North and the South is—I will not say a hopeless one, but one which does not promise at an early period a final and complete success. When Mr. Lincoln called out his volunteers for the defence of the capital, the Confederate government was organised, and there was not within the confines of the eleven slave States one square yard of territory over which Mr.

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Lincoln could enforce the laws of the United States. How stands the matter now? (Hear.) Missouri—I may almost call her a free State—has accepted compensation for her slaves. (Hear.) She has elected anti-slavery representatives to the Congress, and she may be fairly included among the number of the future free States of America. (Hear.) In Kentucky, and Maryland, and Delaware, tho Federal authority is maintained. In the last-named State (Delaware) a governor has recently been elected, who, by two successive proclamations, has pledged himself to render to Mr. Lincoln the warmest support in the carrying out and accomplishing of all his measures. (Hear.) I think there are no enlightened men in the Northern States, and few here, who do not consider that the emancipation of the slaves, both in Maryland and Kentucky, will be accomplished at no very distant day; and, in the mean time, those States are at all events in the Union, and the Federal authority is respected. We know also that the better half of Virginia is loyal to the Union, and may also be looked upon as a future free State. We know also that over a great part of South Carolina, over West Florida, on both sides of the Mississippi and on the peninsula of Florida itself, as well as in West Tennessee and in Eastern Arkansas, authority is paramount. The result of the whole is, speaking with reference to territory and population, that the authority of the constitution is exerted over two-thirds of the territory that was feloniously taken from the Union, and over more than four millions of the free inhabitants of those eleven States. (Cheers.) A word in support of the resolution now before you. You are asked to sympathise with the North. I will not go over the many and good reasons that Dr. Watts has assigned for your taking this course; but I, as an old abolitionist (cheers), may ask you to support the North in consideration of what the North has accomplished in the direction of emancipation. I am not going to discuss the earlier measures of Mr. Lincoln. I am prepared at any time to justify those measures. I believe that the character of Mr. Lincoln, as a constitutional ruler, is capable of entire exculpation. (Cheers.) But with reference to what his original motives or designs may have been, let us look at what is accomplished. In my most sanguine moments during the twenty-nine years that I have incessantly watched the anti-slavery struggle in America, never did I hope to live to see one-half accomplished that has been accomplished during the last two years. (Loud cheers.) What has been done? and who has done it? (Hear.) The seat of the Federal government, the city of Washington, which during my two visits to America was full of slavery, and slave pens, and slave auctions, and slave vessels (at least its port of Alexander), that national district has been purged from the pollution of slavery, and the government has therefore put the national brand upon the infamous system. (Cheers.) That debateable country, that vast North-West territory, comprising, I believe, a million and a quarter of square miles—over the whole of which the slave power intended to extend its system,—has been redeemed; the question has been settled, the decree has gone forth—those vast Western territories are for ever to be the scene of the compensated labour of free men, and the

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heritage of your descendants to the latest generation. (Cheers.) The Northern ports, which, in violation of Federal law, at least connived at the carrying on of slave-trade operations, those ports also have been purged of their impurity and crime; other officials have been placed in the positions filled by pro-slavery democrats; and now there does not go forth from any Northern port any vessel which can be suspected of being bent upon an improper and illegal mission. And to give full proof of the determination of the administration to put down the African slave-trade, we know that a slave-trading captain, brought to conviction, was left to expiate his crime upon the scaffold as a felon of the first magnitude. (Cheers.) Well, sir, we know that during no previous administration was the interesting republic of Hayti, or the equally interesting republic of Liberia, ever recognised by the government of the United States; no man from either of those republics was permitted to fill the office of consul at any American port. Mr. Lincoln and his government have recognised those republics as independent States—(cheers),—has invited them to take part in the legislation, and a recent mail has brought us the tidings of the arrival in the city of Washington of a representative of the Republic of Hayti, who was received as any other minister from a foreign power would be received and banqueted at the table of Mr. Seward, surrounded by the pale representatives of the proudest potentates in Europe. (Cheers.) Add to this, that for more than a year Mr. Lincoln has been earnestly engaged in attempts to bring the border states, if possible, to accept of compensation in return for the adoption of measures either for gradual or immediate emancipation. Put these things together, and remember that, as a crown to the whole, Mr. Lincoln on the first day of this year issued a proclamation declaring the legal freedom and citizenship of three millions of the once enslaved race, and then, I say, that the Northern government representing the Northern people, and the people and the government, are well worthy of your sympathy and admiration. (Cheers.) It was once said of Napoleon that he would go down to posterity with his Code in his hand; and I believe that Mr. Lincoln will go down to posterity with those measures in his hand which have signalised his administration;—and when passion is allayed, and when strife is hushed, and when the graves are closed, and when harvests shall wave where men fell in mutual slaughter, then Mr. Lincoln will be remembered as a just, beneficent, and liberty-loving ruler, who, to the extent of his constitutional ability, carried out the great American idea that all men are equal and entitled to liberty. (Cheers.) The remedy for these abuses and crimes on our side is not to be sought or found at the hands of the government of this country, but from the universal people. (Cheers.) I am glad to learn that the government has, though late, taken one of those steps that it ought to have taken earlier. (Hear.) We must hold up these men, who will presently be referred to in their true colours, and though they fear not God, nor regard men, yet, we believe, they are to be reached by that which is more powerful than an earthquake or the hurricane—the manifested voice of the public opinion of the country. (Cheers.) I want to explain the meaning of the

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word "copperhead," which I have used. You are aware that the lion and the unicorn and also the rose are the national symbols of England, as the thistle is of Scotland, &c., and that the spread eagle is the symbol of the Union in America. Now, South Carolina—the first state to secede, and which has always been the very hotbed of secession—when she hoisted her standard of rebellion, put upon it as her symbol a rattlesnake. (Laughter.) It is an interesting fact in natural history that this reptile, in sloughing its skin, is subject to temporary blindness, and in this state of helplessness, when it is unable to pursue its prey, it is helped by a friendly snake called a "copperhead,"—(hear)—who kindly brings it food during the period of its blindness. Now the democrats in the North have manifested much sympathy with the slave states (though, I am glad to say that a very significant reaction has recently taken place), and the Republicans of the North have given to the democrats, who are peace-at-any-price men, and who would gladly compromise the principles of liberty in order to be restored to the South, the name of "copperheads." Now, I think we have a good many "copperheads" in England. (Cheers and laughter.) Far be it from me, however, to give you even so much as a hint, if you meet on 'Change to-morrow, or on the pavement, or in one of your workshops, a man who sympathises with the South, that you should call him a "copperhead." (Laughter.) But I may be permitted to apply the name to those men of whom you will hear something to-night. They are "copperheads" of the worst description, for they are effectually fighting the battles of the foulest and darkest rebels that ever lifted their hands against their government. For remember it was their own government—(hear);—it was the government which their fathers had founded—the government to which the whole people had assented—a government which they themselves had administered for more than fifty years—a government that had always acted towards them in the most indulgent manner. Against this government it was that they rebelled, thereby breaking their own oaths, and overthrowing that very constitution which they were bound to respect and to support. (Hear, hear.) English "copperheads" are supporting these rebels; they are doing more—they are doing what they can to prevent the emancipation of four millions of slaves. ("Shame.") And they are doing what they can also to assist an oligarchy in the Southern States to build up a government that deliberately intends to enslave not black men alone, but all who are in the position of labourers. (Hear, hear.) Only the other day I got a letter from a friend in Kentucky, who is nobly fighting the battle of freedom there, and has lost everything in it. He has lost two of his sons in the war, and two daughters also, who were brought to a premature grave owing to the vicissitudes under which they laboured for a considerable time, and the deprivation of the necessaries of life during a raid into that state by John Morgan, one of the Confederates; and this friend writes to me that he has long been cognisant of the intentions of the seceding party, that whenever their independence is recognised they will limit the franchise to those who are either the holders of slaves, or the possessors of a large amount of real estate. That will reduce the entire working population of the Southern

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for the Admiralty, declared that unless in this instance the Foreign Enlistment Act could be enforced, it was little better than a dead letter. Upon the 24th, two further depositions were forwarded by Mr. Adams to the Foreign Office, although they added but little to the evidence already in the hands of the government. The evidence which, submitted to Mr. Collier upon the 22nd, produced his opinion upon the 23rd, was placed in the hands of the law officers of the crown on the 24th, but it produced no decision from them till the 29th, and the statement made on behalf of the government was, that a telegram was despatched to Liverpool upon the receipt of the opinion of the law officers of the crown, but that it was then too late, because the vessel (notice of the existence of which had been given on the 23rd of June, and evidence relating to which had been given on the 22nd of July) had escaped from the Mersey, and was going forward on the work of devastation and destruction for which she was designed. (Loud cheers.) If a committee of the House of Commons were to investigate the matter, and to examine witnesses from the Liverpool Custom House, he was not quite sure whether they would find any trace of the *receipt* of a telegram before the 31st, because there were letters dated subsequent to the despatch of the telegram spoken of by the government, which contained no mention of the receipt of such a message at all. It was a circumstance which, of course, could not be explained; but, knowing the general practice of government, and the history of secret diplomacy in all ages, one could not help being a little suspicious when looking at such an interval which was unaccounted for. (Laughter and cheers.) It was admitted then that the *Alabama* sailed from Liverpool, manned by British sailors, who had been enlisted in defiance of the laws of this country; it was admitted that she received arms on board from a British ship, and that she went to cruise upon her mission of destruction without having touched at any port excepting a port in the British dominions; and it was admitted that she disgraced and degraded the British flag by hoisting that flag for the purpose of alluring defenceless merchantmen within her reach, an act which to his mind savoured a great deal more of piracy than of fair and honest warfare. (Loud cheers.) But then we were told, and one would suppose from the pleasant way in which it was told that it was really true, that this was not a breach of international law, and that therefore the Americans had no ground of complaint. (Hear.) Now for a moment he would put on one side the discussion of those two particular questions. He would not discuss now whether or not this was or was not a breach of international law. They would therefore be kind enough to assume that the Americans had no ground of complaint on that particular head. One could not help seeing that there was a great deal of confusion in the public mind, and, in truth, a great deal of confusion in the minds of many politicians who attempted to discuss the question in the House of Commons. Even Sir Roundell Palmer, the Solicitor-General, made the greater portion of his speech of extracts from old documents bearing upon questions long gone by, and discussions long settled; and others who took up the discussion appeared, even as a portion of the press of the country appeared,

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to be unable to distinguish between the Foreign Enlistment Act and the general law of contraband, which was a portion of international law. But let it be remembered that it had no relevancy to this discussion whatever, whether any man charged the people of this country with supplying or exporting arms to the Federals or Confederates,—this was a totally distinct and separate question. It might or might not be a breach of neutrality, or a breach of international law, but that was not the question to be discussed in the resolution before the meeting. What, then, was the question? We had been told that this was not a breach of international law, and that, therefore, the American people had no right to complain. But it was a breach of British law, and therefore the British people had a right to complain. (Loud cheers.) We had a right to complain, not only that the citizens who professed to hold influential positions amongst us; not merely that men who had been sent by the misplaced confidence of some constituencies to represent the people of this country in the House of Commons—(hisses and cheers);—not merely that men who occupied seats upon the judicial bench, and who in their capacity as magistrates were bound to administer the laws of the country—had broken the law in the most shameless manner, but that the government of the country, in whose hands rested the administration of the law—the executive of the country—had stood quietly by, saying: "We cannot interfere, unless you can produce overwhelming evidence to prove the guilt of certain parties." (Loud cheers, and groans for the government.) The ground of complaint against the government, in reference to this case of the *Alabama*, was that it was dilatory in its proceedings. Let them give the government credit for the very best intentions; let it be said, as the Solicitor-General himself said, that the government did as much as it could do under the circumstances, and that it could only proceed upon evidence. It was perfectly true that, with regard to the seizure of vessels by custom-house officers, the Foreign Enlistment Act did provide that certain evidence should be necessary to entitle those officers to act; but did that justify or excuse the government in the course they pursued? The complaint he had to make against the government was this, that they remained perfectly quiescent until it was too late to move; the gravamen of the charge was not that they acted without evidence, or that they refused to act when there was evidence produced, but that in this particular offence they never made the slightest effort to obtain the evidence. (Loud cheers.) Was that the way in which the criminal law of the country in ordinary cases was administered? Let it never be forgotten that a breach of the Foreign Enlistment Act was as much a crime as any other that was punished by the executive power of the state. If a man broke the law in minor matters, did the government in its executive capacity wait till somebody brought to them the evidence which was necessary to obtain conviction? What were the blue-coated gentlemen now walking the streets for? (Laughter.) Were they there to obtain evidence in order to secure the conviction of crime, or were they simply to wait there for the information upon which they were to act? Every man's common sense must tell him that if it were

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the duty of government to punish crime, it was equally the duty of government to detect crime. (Cheers.) Therefore the complaint against the government was that they refused to put in motion the machinery to obtain the evidence, and that they were dilatory in acting when that evidence had been obtained for them. (Cheers.) There had been a defence put forth on the part of the government, which, being put forth by the most eminent law officer of the crown, might be taken as the best defence which could be produced. In the debate which took place in the House of Commons, the Solicitor-General admitted that at all events a foreign government might appeal to the friendly feeling and disposition of the neutral state to enforce its own laws within its own territory. But it could not complain if that law was enforced upon the principle which always prevailed in the country, upon evidence according to law, and not upon mere suspicion or presumption. What he asked was this, that the government should do in this matter as they did in all other matters, and should administer this part of the criminal law precisely as they administered the other parts of the criminal law. (Loud cheers.) But then the Solicitor-General proceeded to point out what he said were some difficulties, and it appeared that that officer had really pointed out one of the misapprehensions into which the general public had fallen. Speaking of the difficulties of bringing legal proof to bear upon the question, the Solicitor-General said: Two things must be proved: first, that there had been what the law would consider the fitting-out, equipping, and arming of the vessel; and secondly, that this vessel was intended for the use of the foreign power. Now, with great deference to the Solicitor-General's opinions, these were not the words of the Act of Parliament. The words of the Act, as taken from the 7th section, in which they occurred, were these: "Be it further enacted, that if any person within any part of the United Kingdom, or any part of his Majesty's dominions beyond the sea, shall, without the leave and license of his Majesty, &c., &c., equip, furnish, fit out, *or* arm." (Cheers.) It was not, as the Solicitor-General said, "and" but "or" arm; arming was a separate and distinct matter from the other points laid down. (Cheers.) The clause then went on to make the attempt to equip, furnish, fit out, or arm a vessel, like the act itself—a misdemeanour. Taking that view of the clause, let the meeting for a moment consider what was the evidence with regard to this *Alabama*, bearing in mind that the offence was to "equip, furnish, fit out, or arm." Now, then, was the *Alabama* equipped, furnished, or fitted out?—that was the question. (Cheers.) It so happened that the evidence of a man named Passmore, furnished to the government on the 22nd of July, was declared by the Solicitor-General himself to be quite sufficient to vindicate the position which the government afterwards, though very dilatorily, took in endeavouring to stop the *Alabama*. Passmore, in his evidence, said that the vessel was built and fitted out as a fighting ship in all respects, that she had shot and canister racks on deck, and that she was pierced for guns, the sockets of which were laid down even while she lay at the wharf in Birkenhead. Now that was the evidence; and did it not satisfy the meeting that whoever

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was engaged in that transaction did attempt to equip, furnish, and fit out a vessel intended for the service of the Confederate States. If so, the evidence was complete, and the talk about the vessel getting the arms on board, on the coast of Ireland or elsewhere, had nothing to do with the question, because that was a separate offence according to the terms of the Act of Parliament. (Cheers.) What he was unable to understand was how, with the subsequent language of the section in his mind, anybody could fall into the mistake of supposing that arming ships alone was an offence against the Foreign Enlistment Act, because the section went on to say that if a vessel were fitted out to be used as a transport or store ship it was an offence within the meaning of the Act. It was quite clear from the language of the Act that any equipment, furnishing, or fitting out of a vessel, which would afford assistance to a foreign power at war with a friendly power was a breach of the law. (Cheers.) It was perfectly conclusive that the difficulties suggested by the learned Solicitor-General must fall to the ground. (Cheers.) It was rather remarkable also that the discussion of this question had proceeded as though seizure of the vessel was the only means of enforcement possessed by the government. Even during the evening all had been rejoiced by the announcement of what was (it was to be feared) the very reluctant act of the government in seizing a vessel building in the Mersey. (Cheers.) The public had received from the press the impression that that was all the government could do; but the Act of Parliament provided for the punishment of the persons, as well as for the confiscation of the vessels. (Tremendous cheering.) The section from which quotations had already been made enacted that "every person so offending shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanour, and shall, upon conviction thereof, upon any information or indictment, be punished by fine or imprisonment, or either of them, at the discretion of the court in which such offender shall be convicted." (Continued cheering.) The Act of Parliament was therefore directed, not merely against the offence, but against the offender. The 4th section of the same Act provided that justices of the peace, acting upon proper information, should examine into the nature of the offence, and act upon it. Now, did any one doubt that Mr. Laird—(loud groans and hisses)—knew perfectly well what was going on in his own ship-building yard. ("No, no," and cheers.) Let us see, exclaimed Mr. Pope. I will refer to the deposition of Passmore, which has been spoken to by the Solicitor-General as conclusive. Passmore said :—

Captain Butcher then engaged me as an able seaman on board the said vessel, at the salary of £4. 10s. per month; and it was arranged that I should join the ship in Messrs. Laird and Co.'s yard on the following Monday. To enable me to get on board, Captain Butcher gave me, as a password, the number "290."

And that is the transaction which, in the House of Commons, Mr. Laird said was perfectly open and above board, *although it required a secret pass-word!* (Cheers.)

On the following Monday, which was, I believe, on the 23rd day of June last, I joined the said vessel in Messrs. Laird and Co.'s yard, at Birkenhead.

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Then, if you go on to the further depositions, you will find that Edward Roberts deposed that—

By the direction of the said Mr. Barnett, I met Captain Butcher [that is the enlisting agent] the same day, on the St. George's Landing Stage, and followed him to Messrs. Laird and Co.'s building yard, and on board a vessel lying there. The said Captain Butcher spoke to the boatswain about me, and I received my orders from the boatswain. I understood, both at Messrs. Laird and Co.'s yard and also on board the said vessel that the said Captain Bullock was the owner of the said vessel.

Another deponent, Robert John Taylor, stated :—

Mr. Rickerby, at Liverpool, gave me instructions to go to Captain Butcher, at Laird's yard, Birkenhead. I saw Mr. Butcher at one of Mr. Laird's offices last Thursday fortnight, viz., 3rd July last.

Now, I ask you, gentlemen, whether you can have the slightest doubt, after hearing these depositions from three persons who were engaged to join this ship at Mr. Laird's yard, that Captain Butcher was very well known by everybody in Liverpool to be the agent of the Confederate States, using Mr. Laird's office for the purposes of enlistment? and can you doubt that Mr. Laird knew perfectly well what was going on all the time? (Cheers.) If this were so—if it were true that there were provisions in the Act of Parliament such as he (Mr. Pope) had read; if it were true that there was evidence before our government such as had been quoted, and that the government were anxious to enforce the Act to the best of their power; he asked the meeting—now there was a crime admitted to have been committed, what had been done with the criminal? (Tremendous cheers.) Why he (the criminal) was in the House of Commons. (Hisses and groans, and cries of "Turn the fellow out.") From his place in the house he boldly avowed that, for the purpose of selfish and private gain, he had done an act which was intended to support a cause based upon a defiance of the eternal laws of humanity, and which necessarily involved a defiance of the laws of his own country. (Cheers.) And yet, cheered by some of the members of that house, the government, either from weakness or indifference, remained perfectly quiescent, and refused to interfere or to punish. Had we not, then, some grounds of complaint against the government, and were we not right in saying we should be content with nothing less than effectual steps to prevent these nefarious proceedings. (Loud cheers.) Even if the government were weak or indifferent, the criminal could not escape from the bar of public opinion. He must be told—and all such must be told—that self-aggrandisement was not the highest characteristic of the British merchant. (Cheers.) Was it a light thing to imperil the peace of such a country as this? If we must have war, should it not be upon some occasion which might justify, or excuse if it could not justify, the dreadful sacrifice. "If war must come," said Canning, in discussing a similar question, "let it come in the shape of satisfaction to be demanded for injuries, of rights to be asserted, of interests to be protected, of treaties to be fulfilled, but, in God's name, let it not come in the paltry, pettifogging way of fitting out ships in our harbours to cruise for gain."

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(Loud cheers.) In Manchester, we had been somewhat accustomed to be taunted with the commercial tone of our politics. We had been told that here our king was cotton, our conscience was cotton, our hopes and aspirations were cotton. It was the glory of the working classes of Lancashire that not even privation and distress had been able to wring from them a single cry, except a cry for liberty and emancipation. (Cheers.) Let them, then, so far as their voices could carry it, tell the country again, as they had told it before, that however it might consist with the conscience of the honourable member for Birkenhead—(hisses and groans)—to be handed down to posterity as the builder of the *Alabama*, and a supporter of the Southern slaveholders' confederacy, instead of a labourer for the rights and emancipation of the people, the working classes of Manchester, at all events, still maintained the conviction that the pursuit of commerce was honourable only so far as it was conducive to the peace and welfare of the realm, and was conducted in dutiful obedience to the laws of the state which had protected it and given it stability. (Prolonged cheering.)

Professor F. W. Newman seconded the resolution. After some preliminary remarks, he said: I cannot pretend to legal knowledge; but happily that is needless, after the speech which you have just heard on the legal side of this question. (Hear.) This meeting is probably as little acquainted as I am with the details of our law. The American public is, of course, less acquainted with it still; and (what is well to observe) they cannot be expected to care about our law at all: they care only about the broad moral aspect of the facts. (Hear.) Against our government, we have a two-fold quarrel: one on which Mr. Pope has just enlarged, and one to which I direct your attention, which would be equally valid if no Foreign Enlistment Act at all existed. Englishmen are bringing us into danger, and the government does nothing to save us from the danger. (Hear.) In past times the English Government has always acted with a very high hand, and with supreme scorn of the technicalities of public law, when it has thought its own safety required it. You have all heard how it dealt with Copenhagen, when it believed that it had sure information of an intrigue, by which Napoleon I. was to become possessed of the Danish fleet. Though Denmark was a neutral power, the English Government sent a fleet to bombard Copenhagen, seized upon the Danish ships, and carried them away as a booty. (Hear.) What right would it have to be surprised if Federal ships were now to attack Birkenhead or the Clyde, in order to destroy or carry away the forty or fifty new *Alabamas* which Earl Russell must know to be destined to attack the Federal merchant navy or the docks of New York? (Cheers.) In providing for the safety of this nation, statesmen have always considered, not how much they could prove before a jury, but what was proved to their own moral assurance. If Earl Russell has no real doubts of the destination of any of these ships, he is bound to take the same precautions as against pirates preparing to attack us. (Hear.) Not only has he not prosecuted the builder of the *Alabama*, as Mr. Pope has insisted, but when the ship escaped he did not

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order it to be pursued. A remarkable precedent for this was given in the case of the ship *United Kingdom*, to which Lord Palmerston adverted in a recent debate. (Hear.) This ship, in the Spanish war of Don Carlos, got out, exactly as did the *Alabama*, because the ministry could find no adequate legal plea for seizing it. But they took care that a ship of war should follow it close, and prevent it from taking guns and ammunition on board: which was done so effectually, that it was forced to return to England without any result. This case, quoted by Lord Palmerston in defence, will, on the contrary, convince Americans that our ministers have connived at the escape of the *Alabama*: and the resentment of nations can never be appeased by lawyers' pleadings. Does any of you doubt how Lord Palmerston himself would have behaved to the Emperor of China, if in the Russian war Chinese war-junks had come forth from Canton or Shanghae, with a Chinese crew and a Russian captain, to waylay, plunder, and burn our goldships from Australia? I believe he would forthwith have attacked Canton or Shanghae without any previous formalities of expostulation, and would have tried to burn the pirate ships in the docks themselves. (Hear.) If the Federals do not attack Liverpool and Birkenhead, because their hands are now too full of work, their sense of our wrong is not the less acute, but accumulates in their hearts while they suppress it. And, wonderful to say, while we goad them with this and many other injuries, our public men pay compliments to the ministry, and the ministry praise themselves, for their excellent behaviour to the Northern States. (Hear.) Nay, an eminent person has said that we deserve the *gratitude* of President Lincoln for the very delicate consideration we have shown him in not recognising the South! ("Oh!") One person after another tells me that the North is ridiculously sensitive, is fanciful, is irritable, is childish. Well, if the North be a child, that child is a giant. (Hear.) People may say what they please; but the Free North is a great fact, and, moreover, is going to be a greater fact. (Cheers.) She has established the working man's birthright—his right to education and refinement, to respect and honour—his right to rise, unimpeded by artifical barriers, to the highest place which he deserves. This is the guarantee of her perpetual growth. (Cheers.) The North has purged the Union of complicity with slavery; and when it comes out of this contest as the victorious champion of freedom, and the winner of rights for even the white millions of the South itself, it will undoubtedly have a new and just self-confidence, having experience in war, a fleet containing iron-clad vessels such as none of our wooden ships can face, and a power of rapid shipbuilding which Great Britain herself can hardly equal. Is this a power to which we can afford to give deadly offence? And is not this precisely the power which ought to be our dearest friend? It has now given, not twenty millions of money, as we gave to free the negroes in our colonies, but one hundred thousand precious lives of its own citizens, to prevent the new territories of the Union from being defiled with slavery, and the whole Union being perverted into a slave system. (Cheers.) By their conduct in the last three years, the Northern States of America, which are the heart of the Union,

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have raised the moral value of the Union immeasurably in the estimate of right-judging men. (Hear.) I would fain hope that ministers, before it is too late, will put out sincere energy—will stop the pirate-ships, and prosecute the builders and promoters. (Hear.) But whatever they do or neglect, our duty is, to the utmost of our constitutional power, to secure that the American Union shall have no ground of war against us on this matter. (Cheers.) At the next general election, we ought to put to all candidates the following questions:—"Will you vote in Parliament to pay indemnity to America for all the damage which the *Alabama* and her sisters may have committed? and will you press on the government the duty of suing Messrs Laird, Lindsay, and all others concerned, to repay that indemnity, though to the sacrifice of the uttermost farthing of their fortunes?" (Cheers.) I presume that it is your judgment, as mine, that they ought to be made to repay. I could, perhaps, judge pretty well of myself; but I have also received information how you are minded from a quarter which you may not suspect. Earl Russell has declared, in a letter to the American ambassador, that the people of England are universally in favour of the North. This was said by Earl Russell—was said officially—perhaps a year ago. Now, as the historical estimate of a Russell is that of a statesman who counts the nation as something, especially when he is about to expose it to the contingency of a war, we might have expected of him more energy in this matter. Consider what would be the meaning of such a war in such a cause. (Hear.) It would mean, first of all, the stoppage of all the corn now received from America, and with it a great dearth of bread. (Hear.) It would mean, also, not one *Alabama* proceeding from America, but fifty or a hundred, to attack English commerce. (Hear.) There are, perhaps, two dozen ships of the Federal navy at this moment chasing that one vessel. How many of her Majesty's ships would be needed to chase the privateers, or the armed ships of the American government, if we got entangled in this war? (Hear.) We should inflict severe blows, no doubt; yet they could not hinder the inevitable result, the sweeping of English commerce from all the seas. Our commerce could only be carried on in neutral bottoms. And whence would so vast a merchant navy of neutrals arise?—unless, indeed, all the English ships could be suddenly sold; and what would meanwhile come to the English millions who live by trade? what, also, to the public revenue? Even in the best of causes, such a war would be terrible; but in so bad a cause it must miscarry; for England would be divided against herself: thousands of us would pray for the defeat of our country. Some one cries, No? but I say, Yes. Both morality and patriotism would lead to this. To a criminal, nothing is so bad as the success of his crime; and to a country involved in unjust war, no curse is so great as the success of its injustice. What I feel, thousands besides would feel—that it would become our duty to use all legal and constitutional means of thwarting and stopping the government in such a war, and forcing it to make peace by submitting to the just demands made upon it. But, meanwhile, yet another danger would threaten us. Lord Palmerston told us a very few years ago,

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that we were in imminent danger from the enmity of France, and that we must spend nine millions of money in fortifications. (Hear.) If that was not an utter falsehood and monstrous iniquity—to take that nine millions for nothing out of the pockets of the people—what would happen from the enmity of France if we got into war with America? It may be probably calculated that France would presently find or make an excuse for joining the Americans against us, as she did in the first war: and what would then become of Ireland? To build, or promote, or connive at these pirate ships, is to prepare the way, first, to starve the people of England; secondly, to sweep away the commerce of England; thirdly, to make it probable that the colonies will revolt in self-defence; and lastly, that Ireland shall be convulsed by dangerous civil war. I therefore denounce this as a wicked and abominable proceeding, whether it be or be not an offence against the letter of the English law; and I hope the meeting will sanction the resolution. (Loud cheers.)

Professor GOLDWIN SMITH, of the University of Oxford, on being called upon, said: Mr. Chairman, I will not detain the meeting long at this late hour in supporting the resolution. The legal aspect of it has been thoroughly enforced by Mr. Pope, the moral aspect by Professor Newman. I came here to-day from Oxford, not to speak, for I am not in the habit of speaking, but to join in a meeting in favour of a cause which is that of all England. (Hear.) Never did men meet for a better or more patriotic object than has called us here to-night. (Hear.) I do not regard this as the cause of North America; I regard it as the cause of England. (Hear.) I regard it as the cause of the honour, the good name, the position of England among nations. Ships have gone forth from the ports of England on various missions; they have gone forth to carry the blessings of commerce, and the productions of this great city all over the world; they have gone forth sometimes to carry the missionary with his burden of truth to distant lands; they have gone forth sometimes for a sterner, but still honourable purpose—to defend their country in fair and honest war—(hear); but never yet has there gone forth from the ports of England the black flag of the buccaneer. (Hear.) I wish, indeed, that it were the black flag of the buccaneer; but unhappily it is the flag of England that floats over the *Alabama's* deck. (Hear.) Like the speaker who preceded me, I dwell more readily on the moral than on the legal aspect of this question. The duties of nations towards each other are not bounded by the technical rules of law; they are as broad as the rules of morality and honour; and if, in our dealings with America, we violate the rules of morality and honour, we shall abide the consequences of wrong-doing, though our lawyers may advise us that we are secure. What is taking place? The Federals have blockaded the Southern ports; the Southerns cannot wage a naval war from their own ports; they are allowed to use our ports for the purpose. (Hear.) No nation ever inflicted on another a more flagrant or a more maddening wrong; and no nation with English blood in its veins, as the Americans have, ever bore such a

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wrong without resentment. (Cheers.) The case of the *Alabama* bears no analogy to the case of the sale of munitions of war. (Hear, hear.) She was not, like munitions of war, exported to the territory of her purchasers. (Hear.) She did not go, and never was meant to go, into a Confederate port. Up to this moment, I believe, she has never entered a port in the Confederate territory. Built and equipped in England, manned by English seamen, with the English flag flying, she goes forth to cruise from an English port against the commerce of our allies. That is the substantial grievance of the American Government, and no technicalities of the Solicitor-General will make it otherwise than a heinous wrong. (Loud cheers.) The Solicitor-General says that the North have in previous instances been unduly sensitive. No doubt they have. I do not justify all the language that has been held by Mr. Seward, nor all the complaints that the American minister has made. But remember this, that nations when struggling in the agony of a contest for existence are apt to be sensitive, and we must be forbearing towards their sensitiveness. That they may have been too sensitive on former occasions does not affect the great question which is now put before the moral sense of our nation. (Hear.) We are met here to-night, I hope, not merely to talk, but to do something to save the country from a great danger. (Cheers.) Nations do not make up their mind beforehand deliberately to go to war; they become exasperated, and then they are carried into war—to use the expression of one of our own statesmen (if those who "drift" deserve the name of statesmen), they "drift" into war. And we may now drift into a war with America. There has gone out to the Americans the report of the debate on Mr. Forster's motion; they will soon have read the speech of the Solicitor-General, treating their complaints with little courtesy; they will have read the speech of Mr. Laird, avowing, I think I may say, what I cannot but call his crime. (Cheers.) They will have seen that a large party in the House of Commons received Mr. Laird not with disapprobation, but with enthusiastic cheers; they will have seen that the announcement of the success of the *Alabama* herself was cheered in the House. This will have gone out to them; it will excite in them bitter feelings, and perhaps they may do on their side something that will cause our government to demand reparation. In that way we may become involved in war. And remember what a war it will be. It will be a war between kindred nations, bound to each other by all the ties by which brethren can be bound. Not only so, but it will be a war that will cut off our main outlet for emigration, and that at a time when such an outlet is more than ever needful. (Cheers.) It will be a war also cutting off one of our main supplies of food. After generations may curse this day, unless we can do something to avert the evil. (Loud cheers.) Remember that about seventy years ago England was drawn into a war with another republic by the political passions of the upper classes; for the upper classes, too, have their political passions, though they talk as if political passion was confined to the people. (Hear.) We were drawn into a war with the French republic

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that lasted twenty fatal years; £600,000,000 of debt were accumulated, mountains of money besides were sunk, oceans of blood were expended. And the burden of the war fell mainly on the lower classes; for the landowners got back their taxes by high rents, and the clergy by high tithes; the burden fell mainly upon the lower classes, and those classes have not recovered it to this day. Remember, you who have the suffrage, that you are trustees in this matter for those who have it not. Remember that the millions lie helpless and unenfranchised; that they cannot lift a finger to save themselves; that they may be drawn into this war by the passions of classes whose interests are not theirs. Therefore make, if you can, a manful struggle to avert the evil. The government has shown itself weak; but there are in it, no doubt, good elements. You cannot mistake from the bearing of Lord Palmerston that he is the head of the Southern party. (Hear.) It seems, on the other hand, from some expressions that have fallen from Earl Russell that his heart is now on the right side; that he remembers his old liberal principles; that he recollects that he led the liberal party in the days when liberal principles were not, as now, a mockery, but a source of pride and hope. (Cheers.) Lend, then, if you can, support to the weak but the good party in the government; and, if you can, sustain it against the other party. Show that you will use your strength at the elections. Press the ministers to do their duty. Save the nation from this dishonour and from this danger. Save the ministers themselves from bringing on their country a calamity, which, if they do bring it on her, will make their own names infamous and accursed for ever. (Loud cheers.)

The resolution was carried almost unanimously, only about a dozen stray hands being held up against it at the end of the room.

Mr. Charles Rawlins, junr., of Liverpool, said: The resolution I have the honour of proposing is this:—

That this meeting calls upon the Chambers of Commerce and the public press of the country, in view of the momentous moral and commercial interests jeopardised, to speak out boldly in behalf of British honour and international law, and to assure the people of the American republic that their brethren in Great Britain repudiate all complicity with those enemies of freedom and humanity, at home and abroad, who are seeking to establish a nation on "the wild and guilty phantasy, that man can hold property in man."

Gentlemen, this resolution seems to point to a principle which is nowhere more universally recognised than in this town, namely the division of employment in the pursuance of a great object. It calls upon the chambers of commerce to take in hand the duty which especially devolves upon them, namely, the protection of the great commercial interests of the country which are endangered by any infraction of our neutrality; and it calls upon the public press—than which, notwithstanding all that has past, I believe a purer and a freer press has never existed in the world,—to speak out boldly on behalf of the great principles of international law and British honour, and the great moral principles which are inseparably connected therewith. It is because we conceive that British honour has been compromised, and that international law has been violated,

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that we are met in this building to night. I know that this is denied by the law advisers of the crown; but I think our friend Mr. Pope has effectually demolished some parts at any rate of the Solicitor-General's most specious speech. (Cheers.) The Solicitor-General took great credit for the governnent that they had offered no facilities for the sailing of the *Alabama*, that it was only by stratagem, and by a violation of the laws that she had shipped out. Now what is the evidence of Mr. Laird himself in his speech in the House of Commons? (Hear.) Mr. Laird said, "When the officers of the government came to the builders they were shown over the ship, and day after day the custom-house officers were on board, as they were when she finally left, and they saw nothing wrong; they only left her when the tug left, and they were obliged to declare her a legitimate transaction." Are we to be told that government gave no facilities for the sailing of this ship when they had the custom-house officers hovering about her, and as it were giving her hints that she must not take in her guns there, that it would be safer for her to sail away to the Azores, and let the guns follow her? (Hear.) On the other hand, the law officers of the crown delayed their opinion upon depositions which had been sent in, and which were bandied about from the collector of customs in Liverpool to the commissioner of customs in London, from him to their own solicitor, from the solicitor to the Treasury, from the Treasury to Lord John Russell, and back again to the law advisers of the crown. While these depositions were being thus treated, can we wonder that the officers on board declared that there could be nothing wrong in the transaction? (Hear.) Need we wonder that she sailed without a register or without a clearance? Since then that vessel has been doing her work of plunder and destruction. She has not only destroyed American property, she has destroyed English property. And when the owners asked Lord John Russell to whom they are to look for redress, Lord Russell coolly tells them that they must find redress in Confederate prize courts which never had, and probably never will have any existence. (Shame.) Here are facts which ought to engage the attention of Chambers of Commerce throughout the country, of the public press, and above all of the houses of legislature. Will they stand by and see without further inquiry and without positive action this flagrant and culpable neglect in the execution of our own laws? From the city whence the *George Griswold* came laden with substantial sympathy for our distressed people, we now hear strong remonstrances and suggestions of retaliation. Why, the *George Griswold* actually sailed into the very port on her errand of mercy whence issued the *Alabama* on her mission of destruction. (Hear.) When our American brethren further reflect that the Confederate loan has met with brilliant success in this country—a loan to support rebellion, a rebellion not raised for the sake of freedom but for the perpetuation and indefinite extension of slavery; when we reflect that every dollar of that loan will go to send out more *Alabamas*, now actually equipping in our ports; when they read the Solicitor-General's speech, which is a continued string of instructions how to evade the law and send those vessels safely out of port on their

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piratical expeditions; when they reflect that these privateers are built by a nation who professed to repudiate privateering as a relic of barbaric warfare; and when they read the *Times* daily issuing its articles insulting those political institutions which are as dear to them as our own institutions are dear to us,—then I say amidst all this meddlesome neutrality on our part can we wonder that the tide of indignation rises higher and higher, and that the love that should exist between brethren is converted into hate? (Cheers.) The hearts of the people we know to be sound upon this subject and upon the subject of slavery. (Hear.) The working classes have an instinctive feeling—as our esteemed friend Mr. Potter said in his admirable letter—that if principles subversive of freedom succeed in one part of the world, they may be tried in another. Heartily and sincerely do the working classes concur in the great doctrine that all men are born free and equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, and that part of those rights are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The greed of gold may tempt our capitalists into Confederate loans, and into violations of our law, but not even the pangs of hunger can seduce our working population. (Cheers.) A scanty supply of cotton may here and there tempt a mistaken millowner into a palliation of slavery, but not even the scanty loaf can break down the passionate love of our operatives for personal freedom. (Cheers.)

Mr. Eccles Shorrocks (Over Darwen) said: The resolution which I have the honour to second calls upon the Chambers of Commerce and the press of this country to speak out boldly on behalf of British honour and international law. (Hear.) Our government, during the contest raging in America, has shown great prudence and judgment in the administration of affairs; but, with regard to the *Alabama*, we think they have not been sufficiently on the alert. We cannot suppose that there was intentional neglect, but a remissness, which may be injurious to the interests of the country. The law prohibits (59 Geo. III., c. 69, sec. 7), under a penalty of fine and imprisonment and forfeiture of property, the equipment, furnishing, and fitting out or arming of any vessel to be employed in the service of any foreign prince, state, or potentate, with intent to commit hostilities against the subjects or citizens of any prince or state with whom his Majesty shall not then be at war. (Hear.) It behoves us to be very careful how we act, for we may find in future that our own conduct and actions at this time may be brought seriously to bear against us; if we, unfortunately, should be at war with some great power, we may derive great injury from the assistance which may be given by neutral powers to our opponents. (Hear.) I think that our Chambers of Commerce would be legitimately employed in taking up this question, as it affects our interests seriously in case we are belligerents; but above all, inasmuch as it endangers the relations between two great countries connected so intimately as the United States and England. During the Russian war there was a resolution passed by the Chamber of Commerce. The merchants of New York, as part of the body of merchants of the United States, will uphold the govern-

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ment in the full maintenance of the neutrality laws of the country they acknowledge and adopt. I have always regarded the act of the United States, in preserving this neutrality, as binding in honour and conscience as well as in law, and they denounce those who violate them as disturbers of the peace of the world, to be held in universal abhorrence. It is of great importance that the commercial classes should bring their influence to bear, that our relations be not disturbed with any country, much less with a nation like America, with whom we are so intimately connected. We see the great irritation that has been caused by the one vessel, the *Alabama*. Every mail brings us evidence how greatly the public mind has been stirred; what is it likely to be, if we allow the large number of vessels now building for the Confederates to leave our shores? It will be almost impossible to prevent a war between this country and the Northern States. (Hear.) And what will be the result? Instead of Lancashire suffering for a period, to which there may be a limit by the increasing supplies of cotton from other countries, the whole country would suffer, and for a period which no man can determine. Do you think that, as some compensation, the existing stocks of cotton in America would come to our relief? I think not. The North Americans would act with an energy which they have not yet shown. Their want of success hitherto may be traced to a want of united effort, while their opponents have been firm and determined. But in a war with this country, arising from a refusal to carry out our own laws, feeling that their cause was just, the whole country would rise. (Hear.) Great as their sacrifices have been in the present conflict, they would not hesitate to employ the whole resources of the country; and I believe the first act would be to burn those stocks of cotton which are said to exist, in order to prevent their export to this country. The ocean would soon be covered with privateers, which would issue from the numerous ports on their extended coast, to prey upon our commerce in every part of the world, and the trade of the whole country would be prostrated. Food would be doubled in price, and it would be almost impossible to obtain the requisite supplies for our population; so that our countrymen might be starving at our doors, and we unable to assist them. (Hear.) It is the duty of the commercial classes, by whose ability and energy the country has prospered in times past, and who would be the great sufferers in case of collision with America, to take up this question, to look at it in all its bearings, and to bring every influence to operate upon the government to put in force the laws, which seem sufficient to stop the departure of these vessels of war. War, with its attendant evils, may be unavoidable sometimes; it may be forced on a country after every honourable means of avoiding it has failed; but, in this case, the evils would arise from our own conduct, from a failure in duty to a friendly country, and on us would lie the responsibility of the calamities and horrors which might arise. To that portion of the press which has never been able to appreciate the commercial interests of the country, which has been constant in its attacks upon the men of this district, never able to comprehend our wants and necessities, which believes that if Lancashire were submerged the country still would prosper,

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which lives in times that are past, considering that a country's prosperity depends upon the magnitude of its army and the strength of its navy, to them our appeals on this question will be in vain; but there is a portion of the press, represented by that influential paper published in your city, *The Manchester Examiner and Times*, to which we may look forward on this question, that the whole subject may be fairly, fully, and freely discussed. We see then that on this question, as belligerents on some future occasion, it is desirable that we should call upon the government to put in force the neutrality laws of the country. Secondly, that it is our interest to do everything in our power to prevent a collision with the North, inasmuch as our commerce would be destroyed, our population would be reduced to want, and our country's honour would be seriously compromised; and next, we come to our duty as friends of humanity and freedom. May no act of ours add to their difficulties; may no deed of ours lead to the division of the Republic, which has afforded a home to millions of our own countrymen, who must otherwise have suffered want and distress at home; and, above all, when we see them engaged in a struggle to cast from their midst that which has been the rock ahead, the source of danger, the great blot on their country, that institution which is a dishonour and a curse to any country. Say not that they are insincere because for so long the freemen of the North for the sake of peace have made concessions to the slave power, which by constant success only became more determined to overbear all opposition. Say not they are insincere when you see the sacrifices of life and treasure. The North have been to blame in times gone by that they did not make a stand against the hateful institution; but if you carry the blame to its fullest extent, even we ourselves in this country have not been blameless in that we were the great consumers of slave grown cotton. Now that they are awakened to the enormity of the evil which is in their midst, I think they are entitled to the sympathies of all lovers of freedom. Despots and tyrants might be satisfied to see the two nations, hitherto the foremost in the cause of freedom, destined as we believe to lead the world to new triumphs in civilisation, to see these two engaged in a death struggle, but it would be a sad sight in the middle of the nineteenth century. Ladies and gentlemen, it must not, it cannot, it shall not be. For the sake of our own interests as possible belligerents, for the sake of our country's good, which would be sacrificed by a collision with the United States, and for the interests of humanity and freedom, we must urge the Chambers of Commerce to speak out. We must call upon the press to exert its influence, by meetings like the present we must rouse the public attention to put a pressure upon the government that no more war ships for the Southern Confederacy may leave our shores. (Cheers.)

The motion was adopted with great cheering.

Mr. Ernest Jones, who was much cheered, moved the adoption of the following resolution and petition:—

That a memorial embodying the sentiments of the foregoing resolutions be drawn up, and that a deputation be appointed by the Union and Emancipation

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Society, to present it to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; and that a petition embodying the substance of the resolutions be adopted and forwarded to Thomas Bazley, Esq., M.P., for presentation.

To the Honourable the Commons of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled.

The petition of citizens of Manchester, Salford, and other parts of Lancashire.

Respectfully sheweth,—That at a public meeting convened in the Free-trade Hall, in the city of Manchester, on the 6th April, 1863, whereat about six thousand persons assembled, it was resolved to call the serious attention of your honourable house to the building of vessels in Her Majesty's dominions, for warlike purposes, for the rebel Slaveholder's Confederacy, to be used against the government of the United States, with which this country is in friendly relations. Your petitioners have heard with profound regret that two ships of war, called respectively the *Florida* and the *Alabama*, built on the Mersey, have seized and destroyed on the high seas, about forty unarmed vessels belonging to a friendly nation, and whilst engaged in the peaceful pursuits of commerce. Your petitioners have heard with humiliation and shame the expression in your honourable house attributed to the builder of the *Alabama*, that the entire transaction was fully known to Her Majesty's government and was perfectly "open and above board," although the law officers of the crown have given their opinion that the said vessels should not have been allowed to sail. Your petitioners have good reasons to believe that there are building in Her Majesty's dominions more than forty vessels for the aforesaid rebels. Your petitioners believe that about twelve of said vessels are being "iron-clad," and comprise gun and mortar boats, that the remainder are being so constructed as to be at once carrying and fighting ships; moreover, the intercepted despatches of the rebel confederacy and their agents in this country, dated August and October, 1862, fully corroborate and sustain this conviction of your petitioners. Your petitioners urgently press upon your honourable house the necessity of calling upon Her Majesty's government to detain and prevent from leaving our shores the said vessels until the present struggle in the United States be terminated; in accordance with precedents established by the United States government in the cases of the building of two vessels—the *United States* steamer, for the German government in 1848-9, and the *General Admiral* in 1853,—then in construction for the government of Russia, with whom Her Majesty was that time at war. Your petitioners beg to remind your honourable house of the precedent established by the two principal members of the Queen's present ministry, in the case of the ship *United Kingdom*, which had been built to aid Don Carlos in the civil war of Spain. There having been no legal ground for detaining the ship, she was accompanied and watched by a British man-of-war, which frustrated her objects. Your petitioners call the attention of your honourable house to the fact that the *Alabama* was manned by trained gunners of Her Majesty's Naval Reserve—British subjects; and your petitioners are surprised that no steps have been taken to bring before the proper tribunal the persons who have so grossly violated the foreign enlistment law by these acts. Your petitioners regard, with the gravest apprehension, the irritation which will be caused in the United States by the building and manning in English ports of such a navy for the use and service of the slaveholding rebels. Your petitioners believe that the national honour and morality are deeply concerned in these transactions, and that unless Her Majesty's government interfere to prevent their recurrence, they will be held as substantially aiding and abetting a power which all civilised communities will brand as infamous. That your petitioners are forced to the conviction that the peaceful relations between the two countries are seriously jeopardised, and that we are drifting into a war which would be ruinous to our commerce, would cut off our supplies of food, would place the millions in sullen opposition to the government and in sympathy with the "enemy," may hereby involve the loss of our colonial possessions, and endanger not only the stability of our existing institutions, but even the integrity of the United Kingdom itself. Your petitioners most solemnly pray your honorable house, in behalf of the momentous interests of these realms and of all civilisation, to interpose your power and authority to prevent from leaving the shores of the United Kingdom any vessel which may be reasonably suspected of being intended to aid the slave power.—And your petitioners will ever pray.

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Mr. Jones said: I came quite unprepared to address you, but I don't think that a man needs much preparation when his heart is in the right place. (Cheers.) The petition fully embodies and carries out the sentiments of this meeting, and I have not the slightest doubt that it will be adopted by you with unanimity. You are only asked to be consistent, and to carry out the anti-slavery policy of those who lived before you. You are asked not merely to prevent the catching and selling of slaves, but to prevent the murdering of slaves. Within an hour's ride of Manchester an insult has been offered to the British nation, and to morality all over the world, by the fitting out a pirate ship. (Cheers.) We demand that the government shall put a stop to this levying of war in a clandestine manner upon a friendly state. We are all in favour of non-intervention; you would not allow the government to send a war ship against either North or South. Will you allow a private individual to do for sordid motives what you would not allow the government to do? (Cheers.) Something has been said about those who built the ship, I mean the gentlemen (!) who caused the ship to be built not knowing what it was built for. It has been plainly shown that the speculators who built these ships knew well what was being done. Not only do they disgrace the British nation, but they levy war in the most dastardly manner; they are not only pirates but cowards, because they dare not avow their intentions. (Cheers.) The *Alabama* went on a mission of murder, freighted with treachery and lies. (Cheers.) You are asked to allow such a transaction to take place almost within ear shot of this meeting. But you prevented it, not the government. (Cheers.) You stopped the *Alexandra*. (Cheers.) The government obtains a certain amount of popularity by intending to do the wrong and allowing you to make it do the right. (Hear.) The wind that stopped the *Alexandra* blew from Manchester. (Cheers and laughter.) That wind arose in the Free-trade Hall, at your previous great meeting, and at other great meetings held throughout the country. Yes, it was a Manchester wind that drove the *Alexandra* on a sandbank, and that holds her fast there. (Cheers.) And I hope you will not let the gale die out until every such pirate craft is stranded, and until the real captain, not Butcher but Laird, is shipwrecked along with the vessels that he wanted to launch upon piratical expeditions. (Cheers.) The feeling of this meeting is unmistakably unanimous; I thank Heaven that it is so. When the common sense of the British people has been appealed to, as well as their sense of right and justice, it has never been in vain. Strike the key note of truth and a responsive melody is awakened in the heart of every British workman and every man of every class, except some few black sheep who exist in every community. (Cheers and laughter.) Remember that those who use English labour and capital to enchain the black abroad are the very men who would enchain the white at home. (Hear.) Therefore, you are defending your own rights, asserting your own liberties, ensuring your own freedom, and winning the admiration of mankind by the course you have adopted. (Loud Cheers.)

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Mr. Alderman Livsey, of Rochdale, seconded the resolution, and expressed his cordial approval of the whole proceedings.

Mr. John Noble, jun., supported the resolution, and stated that when in Liverpool the other day he visited the yard of Messrs Laird, and saw a gunboat which was said to be building for the Emperor of China. (Laughter.) One of these pirate ships had come to an untimely end, and such a fate, it was to be hoped, would overtake them all. Though the press, for the most part, and the wealthy classes were for the South, the mass of the people were for the North, because their heart was sound. (Hear.) It was impossible that those who loved true liberty could sympathise with a people who were fighting for its destruction. (Cheers.)

The motion was carried unanimously.

On the motion of Dr. P. Carpenter, seconded by Mr. Councillor Murray, a vote of thanks was given to the Chairman, which closed the interesting and instructive proceedings.

THE CASE OF THE "ALABAMA."

To the Editor of the "Daily News."

Sir,—The Duke of Newcastle says, in his speech at Sheffield—"We have been told within these few hours that it is the business of the government, in its conduct towards other nations, to *disregard* the technical rules of law, those rules being intended to represent the rules of international law." Nobody, let me assure the Duke, has said anything so absurd. What has been said is, that "the duties of nations towards each other are *not bound by legal technicalities*, but are as broad as the rules of morality and honour." Allow me to offer you briefly my reasons for believing that this statement is true. If I appear, like many others, to be against the government of my own country in the matter of the *Alabama* and her fellows, you will bear me witness that I was as strongly against the American government in the matter of the *Trent*, and that no one has more heartily condemned the bearing and language of Mr. Seward on some occasions towards this country. I only pleaded in those cases for the allowance due to the feelings of a nation in the agony of a struggle for existence.

That our municipal law can limit our duties towards other nations, is what no one, I suppose, could expressly assert; though it was tacitly assumed, if I mistake not, in the Prime Minister's speech on Mr. Forster's motion.

As to "International Law," its pretensions, if I may presume to say so, are getting rather high. International law is a law without a legislator, without a defined jurisdiction, without a tribunal, and without a sanction. It is a law which, when it has adjudicated in your favour, instead of restoring you to your rights, empowers and enjoins you to fight a duel.

A book on international law is a somewhat heterogeneous collection. It comprehends treaties and conventions, rules for the construction of foreign contracts and the decision of questions of domicile by courts which are not international, but national, and other information of a miscellaneous kind. But when you come to the proper subject of the book, you find that it is an application of the common rules of morality to the intercourse of nations considered as moral persons. These rules derive no additional force from the sanction of international lawyers, nor are they limited in the slightest degree by anything which international lawyers may have thought fit to lay down.

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There is no "law" between nations which can supersede the jurisdiction of natural morality and honour, as the jurisdiction of natural morality and honour is superseded between persons under the same jurisdiction by municipal law. And if we assume that there is such a law, and at the bidding of its professors disregard the rules of natural morality and honour in any case where those rules are against us, we shall involve ourselves in unjust wars.

The present case is this. The Federals have blockaded the Confederate ports, thereby, among other things, protecting their own commerce against Confederate privateers. We are allowing the Confederate government to send out its privateers from our ports instead, clear of the blockade, and to prey from our shores upon the Federal commerce. We are allowing them to do this, subject to the chance of detection in each several instance by the American Minister, and the production by him, in time for the very deliberate opinion of the law officers of the crown, of such evidence as our government may consider sufficient to secure a conviction.

Now, whether this be a technical offence in the code of international lawyers or not, it is, in the court of natural morality, a flagrant and most maddening wrong; and, if persisted in, it will involve us in a war in which justice will not be on our side.

The case of these privateers bears no analogy to that of a sale of articles contraband of war, or even of ships of war, to belligerents. As to the sale of contraband of war, I confess that I am not disposed to be squeamish. I would as soon sell saltpetre to one party, as bread, which is a most essential "munition of war," to the other. Who can tell the exact difference between a common saddle and a cavalry saddle? Who can say what sort of a ship may not serve, and be intended for, purposes of war?

The *Alabama* was not "exported." She did not go, nor was she intended to go, to any place in the territory of her purchasers. Fitted out, manned, and really commissioned in this country, she has been cruising from a British port against the commerce of a friendly nation. Every one can see the broad difference between such a case as this and the case of a vessel bought in a neutral country by a belligerent, and carried by the purchaser into his own port, there to be fitted out, manned, and sent forth against the enemy as a ship of war.

That this vessel is not cruising from her own ports is clear from this, among other things, that she is compelled to burn her prizes at sea, instead of taking them to be condemned in a prize court: a practice which is against the usages of civilised war.

If there is anything at all analogous to the case of the *Alabama*, it is the permitting troops to pass over your territory to the invasion of a friendly power.

Suppose Ireland, embracing the principles laid down by the Southern party in America and in this country, were to use the sacred right of secession. Suppose we had blockaded the Irish ports; and suppose Spain were to allow privateers commissioned by the rebel government of Ireland, with Spanish crews, to issue from the Spanish ports and prey on our commerce; what would the people of this country demand of their government? They must expect the American people to demand the same of theirs.

As to the nominal transformation which these ships undergo when out at sea, by the reading of a commission from Jefferson Davis, and the calling for "volunteers" among a crew who have been engaged and paid from the outset as man-of-war's men, such a hocus-pocus cannot affect any moral question. In the eye of morality, it is nothing but a proof of fraud. Nor does the running up for a moment of Confederate colours lessen the injury done to the honour of this country by privateering, as the *Alabama* does, under the British flag.

Our government, let it be observed, are not true to their own theory. Their theory, as stated by the Solicitor-General, is, that when a privateer has once bilked an Act of Parliament, our legal position is impregnable, and our duty is at an end. But the government, urged by the voice of morality beyond the line traced for them by their legal advisers, pursue the *Alabama* to Nassau. The same voice, if fairly listened to, will urge them to pursue her wherever she is to be found.

And what of the Confederate government? They are notoriously and systematically committing breaches of our neutrality, and tempting the subjects of

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this realm to violate its laws, at the risk of involving the people of this country in a terrible war. They, as a government, are commissioning vessels to sail from our ports and attack our friends. Are they doing us no wrong? And if they are doing us a wrong, are they not to be called to account for it? As against the Confederate, or any other foreign government, our government need no new powers from parliament. They are fully empowered already to vindicate the rights, protect the interests, and uphold the honour of the nation. Nor, with deference to international lawyers, can I see any limit to the proper exercise of these powers, except the limits of natural justice.

The government of England may, I trust, on this and on all occasions, reckon on carrying the people with it into a just war, however great may be the dangers and sufferings which the war may entail. But it cannot, on this occasion at least, reckon on carrying the people with it into an unjust war. The bond of nationality is strong, but it sometimes is inevitably superseded in the allegiance of the heart by the blood of a common cause. History does not blame the Protestant subjects of Catholic monarchies in the sixteenth century for having stood by Protestantism against their national governments. A case, similar in kind, though less extreme in degree, has occurred now. The cause of the aristocracy on both sides of the Atlantic is one; and accordingly our aristocracy, and the parliament in which it predominates, have shown for the cause of the slaveowner an enthusiasm which they have never shown for any other cause in history. The cause of the people on both sides of the Atlantic is also one; and a large part of the English people now feel this to their heart's core.—I am, &c.,

April 10. GOLDWIN SMITH.

P.S. The journal which unhappily has the credit of being the principal organ of the government, or at least of the Prime Minister, persists in saying that "a war would give us cotton in a month." Surely this is an argument to which those among the people who are most interested in getting cotton have, over and over again, given a decisive answer.

THE FOREIGN ENLISTMENT ACT AND THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL.

(From the "Manchester Examiner and Times," April 14th, 1863.)

A gentleman in Manchester wrote to the Solicitor-General, after the meeting of Monday last, with reference to his speech as quoted and commented upon by Mr. Pope. The following answer has been received :—

Lincoln's Inn, April 9th, 1863.

I have to thank you for your courtesy, in sending me a copy of the *Manchester Examiner*, containing a report of the meeting held on Monday last. I observe, in Mr. Pope's remarks, that I am referred to as having quoted the terms of the 7th section of the Foreign Enlistment Act, as requiring that a ship (to fall within its provisions) should be "fitted out," "equipped, and armed;" instead of "equipped, furnished, fitted out, or armed." This error (which, if I had made it, would have justly received the correction given to it by Mr. Pope in his speech) is not mine, but is that of the reporters, who, generally, are very accurate, but who, in this instance, did not correctly give my words, as will be seen by a corrected report of my speech on that occasion, now in course of publication. The difference is, as Mr. Pope observes, an important one, and I have always been fully alive to its importance. You are at liberty to make any use you please of this letter.—I remain, sir, your obedient servant,

ROUNDELL PALMER.

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